



At left, the Bank of Montreal's deputy chief economist, Doug Porter, and at right, Canada's ambassador to Belgium, Louis de Lorimier, are interviewed by European media about Canada's strong economic performance.

photo: DFAIT

relationship," says Josée Roy, Deputy Director, North America Partnerships and Operations Division. "Our job is to make sure that American policy-makers understand, for example, that Canada is America's largest supplier of energy and that Canada is a secure partner with a secure border."

To that end, DFAIT fans out across the United States with various campaigns. For example, in April the Consulate General of Canada in Los Angeles participated in the 2011 Milken Institute Global Conference, at which high-profile Canadians sat on panels that addressed everything from energy to manufacturing and from international financial markets to social media. The objective, says Marcy Grossman, Deputy Consul General and Senior Trade Commissioner, was to push Canada's brand beyond the stereotype to showcase innovation, investment and energy security.

"Getting attention in the U.S. is always a challenge because it is a busy place where every other country is active," says Grossman. "It is hard to stand out, especially when you are perceived as the friendly neighbour to the north."

Advocacy programs outside of North America, such as the Post Initiative Fund, allow missions to engage in public diplomacy and advocacy on a wide range of issues. For example, in Bangladesh, the High Commission collaborates with the Bangladesh Centre for Development, Journalism and Communication on an annual Canadian award for Bangladeshi journalism. "Award-winning submissions covered everything from water and child labour to corruption and displaced people," says High Commissioner Robert McDougall. "This initiative reinforces Canada's brand because it is all about honesty, integrity and transparency."

In a similar way, DFAIT used advocacy in Europe to promote Canada's efforts in Haiti. "We wanted to share Canada's unique experience and expertise with other nations in Europe," says Louis de Lorimier, Canada's ambassador to Belgium.

Canada organized a week-long program of conferences and round tables in four European cities highlighting Canada's leadership on Haiti and lessons learned from the humanitarian response a year after the earthquake. Again, Canada's leadership and its contributions toward strengthening governance and rebuilding Haiti reinforced Canada's core brand.



From left, Michel Carroll, Senior Investment Marketing Officer, speaks with Canada champions Jason Langrish, Executive Director of the Canada-EU Round Table, and David Pamaenter, a business law partner in Gowling's Toronto office, at the European Business Summit.

photo: DFAIT

Edu-Canada is another DFAIT unit involved in branding Canada. Working with its provincial partners, it tells Canada's education story. Currently, there are over 218,000 international students at Canadian institutions, including about 55,000 from China alone, making the education sector the largest among Canada's exports to that growing country.

"We are in tough competition with nations that score higher on scientific research and innovation," says Jean-Philippe Tachdjian, Deputy Director and Trade Commissioner at Edu-Canada. "But we highlight Canada's brand of being an open and tolerant society with high-quality institutions to attract international students to study here."

Branding is a slow process, concludes Louise Heslop. DFAIT's challenge is to take Canada's core brand and tweak it so that it stays fresh and is relevant to the audience. "Canada's brand has to be earned every day," she says.